

Series I
Correspondence,
1932-1973

Box 3, Folder 3

January 7, 1958 -
March 3, 1958

1083

Box 4
Outgoing Personal, 1958

Letters of invitation and reminders for a Bates party,
7 June 1958, for Vice Admiral and Mrs. Ingersoll.

Dear Libby (Vice Admiral), 28 January 1958
Plans and problems of B E Group in Leyte Study

Dear Don (Admiral Felt), 7 January 1958
Problems of Battle Evaluation Group. Also similar letter
of 3 February 1958.

Dear Jack (Rear Admiral Bergen), 3 February 1958
B E Group problems

Letter to Dear Tom (Robbins), 12 February 1958
Job for Robbins--general comments on Newport and College

Dear Jasper (Holmes), 20 February 1958
Notes on Battle of Midway

Dear Ross (Rear Admiral Whitemarsh), 28 February 1958
Comments on mines

To Admiral Nimitz, 3 March 1958
B E Group problems

Dear Mick (Carney), 17 March 1958
Discussion of Leyte and Halsey

Dear Admiral Conolly, 7 March 1958
Admiral Burke's comment on discontinuing B.E. Group

Dear Priscilla and Sam (Morison), 17 March 1958
Comment on party in Boston, Sir John Slesson and
Brig. General Barton Leach, USAF

Dear Pamela (Mrs. LeRoy King), 9 April 1958
Comments on affairs of Trinity Church in Newport

Dear Colonel Benade, 29 April 1958
Bates' statements on reasons for his not being promoted
to Rear Admiral during World War II.

Dear Dick (Conolly), 30 July 1958
Interesting comments on Vice Admiral Ingersoll's
attitude toward B. E. Group

1084

Dear Reg (Kauffman), 17 November 1958
Comment on book Abandon Ship, sinking of USS INDIANAPOLIS
in 1945.

Dear Slim (Ingersoll), 19 November 1958
Comment on affairs at NWC and Newport

Dear Reg (Kauffman), 1 December 1958
Comments on Morison's histories

Dear Beak (Vice Admiral Beakley), 15 December 1958
Comment on closing out of B.E. Group by people who
never read the reports!! and other related matters

1085

7 January 1958

Dear Don:

I hear that my World War II Battle Evaluation Group is likely to be deactivated as of June 30th. This is certainly news because I had understood at the time the original agreement to do the Battle for Leyte Gulf was made by the President of the Naval War College (Vice Admiral Donald Beary), I think in your presence, that we were to drive on to completion with every help from the Naval War College. I had refused at first to do the job because I realized what it meant in time and man hours but then Admiral Beary said in effect, "You have always been known for standing up for what you believe to be right and now when you can put your thoughts in writing, you refuse!" So, I agreed and I have been working on this study ever since. So far this agreement has been carried out fairly by both the Naval War College and Washington.

Last week, out on the Coast, Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz told me that he wanted me to continue in the work I was doing and ended his statements on this matter with the following: "You must not pull any punches whatsoever." You will recall that this project was established by Fleet Admiral Nimitz as CNO. Clearly he considers it highly important.

About three weeks ago Rear Admiral Samuel Eliot Morison, USNR, the historian writing the Navy's history and who knows my work intimately, said that he knows of no study similar thereto in history—and that he would stress the importance of continuing it when he went to see the Secretary after the first of the year.

About one month ago Rear Admiral Ernest Eller, USN (Ret), the Naval Historian, was here and spent some time studying my work and methods. He said that he was very impressed and if the CNO, or someone else in authority, asked him about the desirability of its continuance he would strongly recommend that it be continued.

I have just received a copy of Volume III, which has recently been completed and which may now be on your desk. I feel quite pleased with this volume which embraces a period of three and one-half days of the preliminary phase of this battle, when Japanese forces were being brought into position and many important decisions were being made on both sides. You will note that I have attempted to highlight battle lessons, important decisions and comments deemed important by capitalizing certain paragraphs. These passages are frequent in this volume and I feel that they contain valuable lessons in command for the officer who will study them. They must, of course, be studied in the context of the entire book.

1086

The real reason that I accepted my present assignment (the evaluation of certain major battles in the Pacific Ocean in World War II) was not merely to produce a narrative of those battles, although this was a lesser included objective, but was instead to study command decisions and from them to derive battle lessons for guidance in future warfare. The whole study has been based on the principle of objectivity. This has been accomplished in part by employing the task group titles such as GTF 77 rather than by employing names.

Certainly there is much to be gained from an analysis of our wartime operations, for, from such an analysis the professional judgement of our commanders can be improved. In this connection the German Vice Admiral, Eberhard Weichold, who commanded the German Naval Forces in the Mediterranean in 1941-1943, is quoted in the ONI Review, September 1946 as follows: "The outcome of every war is not a question of powerful means, war material, and war potential in themselves, but is dependent on the mental capacity of the High Command", and (b) the English historian Liddell Hart, in his little book, "Why Don't We Learn from History", states, "There is a too common tendency to regard history as a specialist subject—that is the primary mistake. For, on the contrary, history is the essential corrective to all specialization. Viewed aright, it is the broadest of studies, embracing every aspect of life. It lays the foundation of education by showing how mankind repeats its errors, and what those errors are. It was Bismarck who made the scornful comment, so apt to those who are fond of describing themselves as "practical men" in contrast to the "theorists"—"Fools say that they learn by experience, I prefer to learn by other people's experience."

Ultimately some one should re-examine all of these battle analyses in order to abstract and compile the most significant naval command lessons. The Army has done something like this in their large pamphlet "Command Decisions" issued June 25th, 1957.

The completion of the Leyte analysis will provide a comprehensive source for such later work. However, if the Leyte analysis is left uncompleted the value of the previous effort will be greatly lessened by the failure to round it out.

If the information of deactivation is correct it certainly seems surprising for is it not true that a strong move is afoot to increase the education of our people, and is it not also true that the Armed Services are making every effort to improve the mental power of the officer corps and hence to improve professional judgement in command? Therefore, does it not seem paradoxical on the one hand, to stress education, and, on the other hand, to suppress it?

I am writing to you about this because (a) your predecessor, Admiral Donald B. Duncan, called me to Washington in December 1955, told me that the CNO desired this study continued, and requested me to continue. He said in addition that he felt from a study he had made, that I was the logical one to do it, and (b) I feel that you are familiar with my analyses.

1087

This letter is being forwarded to you with the full knowledge of the President of the Naval War College and the Chief of Staff.

With best wishes to you and yours for a most successful and happy New Year, I am, as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Admiral H. D. Felt, USN
Vice Chief of Naval Operations
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D.C.

1088

1022

Status (February 1st, 1958) of Naval War College Analysis, Battle for Leyte Gulf:

(a) Volume I - Allied operations (COMTHIRDFLT, Admiral William F. Halsey) against the Nansei Shoto, Formosa, and northern Luzon with Japanese reactions thereto. (October 10th to 0719, October 17th, 1944).

COMPLETED 1953.

(b) Volume II - Allied advance operations in Leyte Gulf (CTG 77.2, Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf) with Japanese reaction thereto. (0719, October 17th to 2400, October 19th, 1944).

COMPLETED 1955.

(c) Volume III - Allied landing operations on Leyte (CTF 77, Vice Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid) with Japanese reaction thereto. (0000, October 20th to 1042, October 23rd, 1944).

COMPLETED 1957.

(d) Volume IV - The approach to Leyte Gulf by Japanese naval and air forces, and the continuity during the three battles. (1042, October 20th to 2400, October 27th, 1944). About TWENTY per cent (20%) completed.

(e) Volume V - Battle of Surigao Strait (Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf), (October 25th, 1944). (This is the battle I should like to complete, if none other). SEVENTY-FIVE per cent (75%) completed.

(f) Volume VI - Battle off Samar. The battle of the CVE's (Rear Admiral Thomas Sprague) against the Japanese battleships. (October 25th, 1944). About FIVE per cent (5%) completed.

(g) Volume VII - Battle off Cape Engano. The battle between the THIRD Fleet (Admiral William F. Halsey) and the Japanese carriers. (October 25th, 1944). TWENTY per cent (20%) completed.

Enclosure to ltr from
CGMO R. W. BATES, USN (Ret.)
of 3 February 1958

7 January 1958

Dear Elmo:

I have been hoping for some time to write to you to congratulate you on your promotion to captain. You have a very fine personality and I hear that you showed, on your carrier, the same high leadership that you showed in commanding your air squadrons. Your selection was not unexpected by me. In fact if you should happen to look at your fitness reports I think that you will find that I went to some lengths to insure that your fine character was well known to the selection board.

I had hoped to write to you before this so I could tell you that Volume III of the Battle for Leyte Gulf had finally been published. Well, it came out on December 19th, so I feel confident you will see it shortly. We already have our copies here and are very pleased with the volume. I had it published on a new kind of paper to keep it from being too large.

I had to work pretty hard to write up the Allied side for the 23rd as there was a great deal of question as to what was best to say regarding the activities of Admiral Halsey (COMTHIRDFLT) and Admiral Kinkaid (COMSEVENTHFLT). I consulted both Admiral Kinkaid and his Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Cruzen, and what I have in there now Admiral Cruzen admits is correct. I have not discussed the matter with Admiral Halsey as I think that the facts as presented speak for themselves. I did take exception to the fact that he permitted Task Group 38.1 to continue toward Ulithi even after major contacts had been made by the submarines.

After you look at this volume I shall be interested to hear from you as to how you feel about it.

Let me wish you and Barbara a very Happy New Year. You have every reason to be pleased with your success in passing the gauntlet from Commander to Captain. Stan

1090

Hindman, who used to be in the office, did not get promoted. I referred his case to what was once Op 54 and was informed by the Aviation Detail Officer in BuPers, Captain A. R. Matter, now commanding the SARATOGA, that his record was outstanding and his failure to be selected unexplainable.

We are now endeavoring to expedite the work on the Battle of Surigao Strait as there are strong rumors that our section may be deactivated. There seems to be no criticism of the section--on the contrary we seem to be well thought of--but the retrenchment program may decide to make us a casualty.

I hear that you conducted classes on your carrier based on some of the products of this section. If so, how did they go?

Once again Happy New Year!

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Captain Elmar S. Waring, USN
USS BOXER (CVA 21)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

1091

10 January 1958

Dear Helen and Dick:

Today I received a note from you, Helen, telling me that you had received the little silver tray which I had sent as an Xmas present. I am glad that you are pleased with it. I personally thought it quite beautiful, and I am delighted it fulfills a need in your establishment.

I want to thank you very much for the privilege of being your guest on my return from the West Coast, I enjoyed every minute of my stay and I had no wish to depart as early as I did, but matters are happening up here, so I have to be on my toes. For you, Dick, rumors are pretty strong that my section will be deactivated. I don't approve of this because I think it unwise to drop a study when it is two-thirds finished. I, therefore, wrote a letter to Admiral Felt about it and perhaps I shall know more in a few days. I think your friend Charlie Buchanan may or may not be one of those to pass on this but I don't know.

As regards the ~~WAVE~~ who interested you Helen, I did talk to her on the plane as she took a seat directly ahead of me. She is a very charming girl—a P.E. Major (physical education to you)—and is an instructor in the WAVE school here. I had not seen her before nor have I seen her since. She turns to be a perfectly charming young woman and I enjoyed my short visit with her. She says P.E. Majors are supposed to be ignorant but actually they take a harder course than most.

I enjoyed the opportunity of inspecting your new home. I am sure that it is what you need and that you will come to like it greatly. It should be much easier for your staff to keep up. Also it should be a pleasure to you both to fix it up at "no cost" to you.

Once again many thanks for my friendly visit with you and with best wishes for the New Year, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

1092

16 January 1958

Dear Jack:

I am enclosing by separate correspondence a Naval War College necktie which I hope you will appreciate as much as I appreciate the ties which you sent me. Whereas the idea of a War College necktie had been pressed by me for some years, I was not effective thereon until the arrival of the first class of foreign officers. These officers announced that they wished some device which they could wear to distinguish them from other people at NATO and SEATO parties, or parties of that nature, where graduates of the Naval War College could recognize one another. The matter was presented to Admiral Robbins who approved it. The first ties were designed by a group without me as a member. In discovering this I complained bitterly that as a member of numerous clubs I knew more about neckties of that nature than did the members of the group. In this I proved to be right, for the original designs were to quote the British, "bloody awful". I was then invited in to the conference and this is the tie which I largely designed. Admiral Robbins made an open speech at the Glambake Club giving me the credit.

The stripes on the tie are designed to indicate the joint nature of the Naval War College; the size of the stripe (to a degree) the number of students. The background of course is navy blue. The gold represents the naval officers present; the small red stripe those of the Marine Corps; the khaki stripe those of the Army, and the light blue those of the Air Force. We have received numerous eponyms on the idea of the tie and on its design. As a graduate of the Class of June 1943 I hope that you will wear it proudly.

The firm opinion here, and that view was expressed to me by the President of the College immediately after you left was that he had been delighted with everything. He is very pleased with his meetings with you and feels very happy that you saw fit to come down here and discuss matters with him. So, you can feel greatly pleased that the High Command of the Naval War College appreciates your continued and devoted interest in your Alma Mater and your ever present desire to be helpful.

As regards my own affairs I haven't heard anything more except the fact that someone is planning to deactivate this section. I am opposed to this because we have put in about seven years on the Leyte study, which study by the way, embraces everything in warfare. We have now finished three volumes and are working on the fourth and fifth. The fourth volume will be the continued operations of the principal commanders and the fifth volume will be the Battle of Surigao Strait which flows out of the fourth volume. I am working on the Battle of Surigao Strait now.

1093

It is too bad that having given so much time to what I believe and what most, if not all, responsible commanders have heretofore believed, is a very important study, the matter is summarily choked off at the time of its possible greatest value. There is always someone who is endeavoring to block my studies. This happened even as early as the Battle of Coral Sea where someone in the Bureau of Naval Personnel hid my original manuscript and it was temporarily lost. However, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations took the phone and demanded that it be found within the hour. It was promptly found - was published by direction of the Chief of Naval Operations, and created a very favorable impression as did the film I made from it.

I have been endeavoring to make a comprehensive study of certain major naval battles in order, intelligently and correctly, to analyze "command decisions" and to obtain therefrom battle lessons which will provide guidance in the art of future naval warfare. While in so doing it becomes necessary to produce a most complete narrative of each of the battles studied this is not an end objective, in itself. Instead it is simply a means by which the end objective is accomplished.

This analysis of the Battle for Leyte Gulf was to be the last of the four battles which I had agreed to do. Of these the battles of the Coral Sea, Midway and Savo Island have long been completed--Leyte Gulf is much longer for this was a campaign rather than a single battle. For example the Battle of Surigao Strait is just as long and difficult as the Battle of Savo Island (another night battle). However, Savo Island was a defeat, whereas Surigao Strait was a shining victory.

It was wonderful to see you here although the Reading Room members and Willie Doyle are sorry that you failed to appear.

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Rear Admiral J.J. Bergen, USNR
40 Wall Street
New York, New York

1094

20 January 1958

Dear Sherman:

Your letter of January 13th relative to your old roommate Jasper Holmes is at hand and I am hastening to reply to it.

In the first place I cannot loan him the two books which you indicate he would like to obtain. They are pretty heavily restricted--so much so that when Admiral Spruance retired and took with him two copies of the Midway analysis he was directed to return them. Retired officers, no matter what their active duty consequence, are not allowed much freedom of action with classified material.

In the second place the Department does not view with favor writers having access to my studies. Several years ago Hanson Baldwin was here, at a Global Strategy Discussion, with a clearance beyond Confidential and visited me here in my office. I showed him my work. He was extremely interested and wrote to the Department for permission to study what I was doing, or words to that effect. I was promptly called to Washington and informed by the Chief of Intelligence (now Vice Admiral Carl Espe), as well as by CHINFO, that I was not to show anyone anything. I replied that Hanson Baldwin had a high clearance. I was then told that that meant nothing--that "need to know" was the guide. The basic reason for this attitude is the simple fact that it is felt that what is released to one is released to all and therefore the Department would be smothered with requests if data were released. In this connection retired officers are no different than Hanson Baldwin.

Finally, I now have no control over the distribution although I have some say in it. That is held tightly elsewhere.

I shall be pleased to hear from Japper and see what he wants. If I can help him I will, but the scene looks doubtful from here.

I was not in Newport for Christmas. I was in California where I stayed for one week. I have four brothers there--two married, one a widower, and one a bachelor. Everything was fine and my holiday was excellent. However, the trip was too fast and too far for so short a stay.

One of the highlights was a two hour visit with Fleet Admiral Nimitz. I had a wonderful time with both the Admiral and his Mrs. He is looking well but the signs of age are upon him. It's too bad, but such is life!

1095

Cordelia Kane says, "please give my best to Sherman and Eliza Jane".
So, here they are! Eccles says hello.

With best wishes to you for a Happy New Year, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Rear Admiral Sherman R. Clark, USN
Industrial College of the Armed Forces
Washington, D. C.

1096

20 January 1958

Dear Judge:

There is a move afoot, of which perhaps you have already heard, to fold up the World War II Battle Evaluation Group completely. When you were up here last fall I told you that I had suspicions that certain people would endeavor to take action against this section if the situation occurred. Why, I have never known, excepting that they seem to feel that battles should not be studied—they are over and should be forgotten. This, of course, is the most foolish kind of philosophy, but at the present moment it seems to have the upper hand.

I wrote a letter to Don Felt about it and mentioned your comments on what we are doing here, as well as those of Fleet Admiral Nimitz and Sam Morison. As a matter of fact the letter herein enclosed is a copy of the letter which I wrote Admiral Felt. I am advising you about it so that if you are called in you will be able to point out the importance of this type of work and perhaps can convince the powers that be that the work should be continued. You will note that I invited Admiral Felt's attention to Volume III of our latest work. Have you received your copy?

I am now working on the Battle of Surigao Strait but I doubt very much if I will finish it by June 30th. Certainly if they decide to fold this section the folding should be delayed for another year in order to complete Surigao Strait, as well as to endeavor to complete the operations until 2400, October 24th. This is so because we have already collected considerable data thereon and are preparing rough drafts for that period.

Sam Morison is expected here today and I plan to talk to him about it.

The enclosed letter to Don Felt is, of course, a personal matter and I hope that you won't pass it around too far.

Finally, I wish to express my regret that Mrs. Tanaka has decided to fold. I had hopes that we might hold her for a while if for no other reason than to clear up those ADVATIS bulletins and to obtain a partial translation of Koyanagi's book, "Kurita's Fleet".

With best regards for the New Year, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. ~~B~~BATES

Rear Admiral E. M. Eller, USN (Ret)
Room 1210, Main Navy Building
Washington 25, D. C.

1097

28 January 1958

Dear Libby:

As you perhaps know, it is planned to fold up my World War II Battle Evaluation Group on June 30th. In fact I received a letter from Admiral Felt relative thereto in reply to a letter from me. The reason I wrote to Admiral Felt is that, as Chief of Staff, here, he was present with Admiral Beary when I was prevailed on to undertake the study of the Battle for Leyte Gulf. I say prevailed on advisedly as I at first refused on the ground that it would take a very long time.

I should certainly like to see this series on the Battle for Leyte Gulf completed, but if it is not desired to complete it I should certainly like to complete the Battle of Surigao Strait, which I am working hard on now. In fact I have been collecting data on it for a number of years and I am into it deeply. Since I have always had great support from your predecessors, the last of whom was, I believe, Admiral Robert Briscoe, I am now writing to you about this as Admiral Felt will be away. I remember that when you took the office I came into see you about what I was doing and you said that if I ever needed your help to come in and see you. This I will do presently!

What I am trying to accomplish now, and what I will speak to Admiral Felt about when he comes up here, is the opportunity to complete, at least, Surigao Strait should I be unable to complete it by June 30th.

Admiral Felt, in his letter to me, said that they didn't like to keep retired officers on active duty—that that was difficult. My answer to that, of course, is that I could be given a "contract" to finish this. It has always been my impression that when it becomes necessary to do this, such a contract would be given me. In fact I have had such a contract in my drawer for the past several years.

When I told Admiral Ingersoll that I was under your section he said that he was going down on the 30th and would speak to you. I am writing to you, therefore, so that should he see you, you would know what it is all about.

For your information I have finished three volumes of the Battle for Leyte Gulf, the third volume of which you should have received this month. If you did, and have looked it over, you will note that it is in great detail. This is necessary because if one is going to study command decision, one must have all the facts. There should be three or four MORE volumes.

1098

The volume I am working on now, the Battle of Surigao Strait, will be Volume V. Volume IV will be the continuity between Volume III and the great battles, i.e., Surigao Strait, Cape Engano, and the Battle off Samar.

When out on the Coast at Christmas I had a long talk--via telephone--with your old friends, the Fritschis. Both of them seem very well and neither of them seems to be working too hard. They are nice cousins! Of course you know that they are very fond of you!!

With best regards, and with best wishes for the New Year, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Vice Admiral R. E. Libby, USN
Room 4E588, Pentagon
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D. C.

January 28, 1958

Dear LeRoy:

I am taking this opportunity to tell you how pleased I am that the Corporation of Trinity Church, realizing the great services which you have rendered over the years to the Church, saw fit to elect you last night as Senior Warden ~~Emeritus~~. I consider this a very high honor, as it is the first case in my own experience where a church has done such a ~~thing~~. I also want to say how pleased I was at the wonderful manner with which you conducted yourself during the past year and a half. Certainly the situation was difficult, and required the type of handling which you gave it. You proved yourself to be not only very much a gentleman, but very much of a man as well!

As one of the members of the Corporation, I want to tell you that I viewed the gift of the silver bowl with pleasure and viewed your acceptance of the honor of Senior Warden ~~Emeritus~~ with even greater pleasure.

As I told you last night, in my opinion, as Senior Warden ~~Emeritus~~ you will have the same functions toward the Church as the five-star officers, i.e., Marshall, Nimitz, et al., have toward the national government.

With best regards to you, and with best wishes to your whole family for a most Happy New Year, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Mr. LeRoy King
"Indian Spring"
Mooreland Road
Newport, R. I.

1100

January 29, 1958

Dear Mayor Peterson:

The other day I sent you a blown-up photograph of Admiral Nimitz decorating me with the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" for my services in command of the MINNEAPOLIS.

For your information I took this photograph to California and asked Admiral Nimitz to write on it in any way he saw fit for posterity. The Admiral said that he would be happy to do more of these if you wished them done. I don't think that that is necessary, but I have photographed this picture and if you wish copies you can have them.

You will note that this photograph has some little cracks in it and also has a torn corner. This occurred, because in taking it out of the cardboard holder, someone was careless. However, the best opinion here is that it is quite satisfactory and that once framed it should be up to the standard of the charts. If you don't agree I will see what I can do.

You will also note that I wrote nothing on the photograph. I had planned to write on it merely my name and rank, but people here in the Naval War College thought perhaps it would be wiser if we allowed Admiral Nimitz to do the speaking.

I am going to blow up a photograph of the MINNEAPOLIS taken during the war and send that along to you presently.

It is, of course a great satisfaction to me, and to those of us here who are familiar with the situation, to know that the Hennepin County Historical Society is doing so much to insure that the great tradition of the heavy cruiser MINNEAPOLIS is retained for posterity.

With best regards to you and to Mrs. Peterson, I am,
as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Honorable P. Kenneth Peterson
Mayor of the City of Minneapolis
Minneapolis, Minn.

1101

January 29, 1958

Dear Fitz:

The question now arises as to the painting of a portrait of the present President of the Naval War College, Vice Admiral Stuart Ingersoll. Having looked over the work of other artists, and having talked to Jack Bergen and myself, the Vice Admiral thinks that it would be fine if you would be willing to paint a portrait of him in a manner similar to the portraits of Rear Admiral Robbins and Vice Admiral McCormick. In other words the plan would be to order you to active duty. What do you think of this?

You may have wondered why you haven't heard from me regarding the little sketch you did of me. The answer is that I thought that I would wait until I saw you to discuss it. Certainly I cannot allow myself to be painted in khaki when blue is not only the navy color, but is the most suitable color for my florid complexion. (My mother told me so!!)

I certainly hope to receive a most favorable reply from you as regards the project of painting a portrait of Vice Admiral Ingersoll. If you accept, when would you prefer to be ordered to active duty? Very frankly, we feel here, the sooner, the better.

With best regards and best wishes for the New Year, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Commander Edmond J. Fitzgerald, USNR
94 The Post Road
Larchmont, N. Y.

1102

January 31, 1958

Dear Henry:

This note is to tell you how pleased I was with the outstanding manner with which you handled yourself last Monday night at the meeting of the Corporation of Trinity Church.

It is clear to me that had you not devoted the considerable amount of time which you did to the subject matter (finances), and had you not been fully informed on every factor related thereto, you might have found the going somewhat tough. This seems so for some people apparently came to the meeting with the objective of being seen and heard—even if they were forced to heckle. Because of this fact I am even more impressed with the calm demeanor with which you demolished the hecklers.

I think that Trinity Church is very lucky to have you in charge of its finances. Had this not been so I would have nominated you from the floor for Junior Warden. But knowing that your charming wife objects strenuously to your taking on additional responsibilities, and feeling that you belong where you are, I remained quiet.

Finally I want to say that you are a fine fellow!

As ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Rear Admiral H. E. Eccles, USN (Ret)
101 Washington St.
Newport, R. I.

1103

3 February 1958

Dear Don:

I want to thank you very much for the very friendly letter which you wrote me the other day relative to the deactivation of this office. Needless to say I am very sorry about the decision because I personally don't believe that it is right. You will have to understand this viewpoint, because, having worked on this as long as I have, I have had to have faith in the importance of the subject matter, else I never would have accepted the assignment. Naturally since a decision has been made I must accept it, and I do so, I trust, with the hope that what I have done in the past measures up to the kind words you have said about it. However, some of the remarks in your letter lead me to believe that the full story is not known to you, and, therefore, I am going to mention a little of it here with the hope that when I see you here on February 11th I will be able to convince you on this one point.

As a matter of information I have been working on the Battle for Leyte Gulf for the past seven years and have completed three of the prospective seven volumes with the other volumes in various degrees of completion as shown on the attached sheet. If you think that this is a long time let me state that it took Holloway Frost—largely as an avocation—eighteen years to write his Battle of Jutland, and he didn't have the problem of air operations to contend with. According to Dr. Louis Morton, the chief army civilian historian, it takes the army historians five years per volume. It takes me far less than that and yet my detail and accuracy are much greater, and my lessons on command not matched at all.

In connection with Volume V, Battle of Surigao Strait I desire to state the followings:

For the past several years I have had one of my captains collecting data and plotting the movements of the Allied and Japanese forces in this battle, and I, myself, have already done considerable work on it. As a result the book is well underway. I have been trying hard to complete it by June 30th, but this seems very doubtful indeed for a lot of reasons which I will enumerate when you come up here. Because of this I am requesting that you do not implement the decision contained in the letter you wrote me until I have spoken to you.

Until the problem arose last month I have never asked for anything in connection with the job, but have always been asked by the High Command in Washington to continue it. In other words the job was being done at the

1104

request of the Chief of Naval Operations and not at my request, although I was happy to do it. I have even given up outside opportunities such as being head of two Latin American War Colleges, either of which, despite my heart condition, I might well have done. I did this because I promised to complete my present task.

I am now making my first request. I request that I at least be allowed to finish the Battle of Surigao Strait, a great U.S. naval victory, because I believe that failure to complete this would be most unwise, and a heavy waste of government funds. This will probably require part of another year.

Outside of this things are going along well here, and I think every one is not only happy, but is getting much out of the College.

With best regards to you and yours, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Admiral H. D. Felt, USN
Room 4E624, Pentagon
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D.C.

1105

6 February 1958

Dear General:

I am now making good on my promise to send you a copy of the V.A. letter referring to the Government insurance dividends. Needless to say the comments do not particularly impress me as to their rationality. Certainly you could not have paid in, as dividends, very much more than I did, yet your yearly dividend is relatively stupendous.

Perhaps if my classmates, and others, start dying off my dividends will increase. If this is so then I have no interest in having it increase, because on that basis somebody might collect on me!

With best regards and many thanks for your courtesy, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Major General Seth Williams, USMC (Ret)
110 Eustis Avenue
Newport, R. I.

1106

4 February 1958

Dear Sam:

I am glad that I got you on the phone yesterday. I didn't want to bother you, but Bern came into see me about something and then announced that you were going to speak to the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Burke, and perhaps to the Secretary, as well. So, I thought that if you were going to speak of my problems, it might be well if you had the facts. I am, therefore, in accordance with your request, sending you herewith the two letters which I wrote to Admiral Felt, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

The first letter was read by both the President and the Chief of Staff of the Naval War College. The second one, since it is merely an implementation of the first one, I sent without release.

Admiral Felt is coming up here on Tuesday next week (February 11th), and has said that he would come in to see me. So, I plan to speak to him about all this.

I have endeavored, in these letters, to point out to Admiral Felt that if we don't do anything else, we should be allowed to complete Surigao Strait, as it is seventy-five per cent completed, and was a great Allied success. I also think that since the major command decisions were largely made prior to 2400, October 24th, and since we have collected considerable data thereon, I should be allowed to do that much also.

No one really seems to understand the amount of labor in getting one of these books in shape for lithography. After the book has been written every page of it has to be retyped and checked by me. This takes about four months; my last volume, Volume III, took longer.

The enclosed letters to Admiral Felt are, of course, a personal matter, and I hope that you won't pass them around.

I want to wish you and Priscilla a very happy year. You should enjoy it thoroughly, as your books are coming along well, and with the America Cup races scheduled for the summer here, you should be in seventh heaven.

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

1107

5 February 1958

Dear Jack:

Realizing your tremendous interest in the Naval War College and your equally tremendous interest in what I am doing, I thought I would send you herewith a copy of the two letters which I have recently sent to Don Felt. I remember when you were here that you indicated that it wouldn't be much good to speak to Don. Your knowledge of him seems better than mine, because he wrote me a very nice letter and announced the decision to close the study. He gave, as one of the reasons, the idea that it was difficult to hold retired officers on active duty.

Admiral Ingersoll told me that he had asked them at least four times to keep me on active duty. Evidently Jimmie Holloway, who was Chief of Naval Personnel, but has since been detached, opposed it, as did Assistant Secretary Albert Pratt last year on Jimmie's advice, but the Secretary took that matter in hand. There are more than rumors that you were decisive in this regard. Thanks!

I personally feel that the whole Battle for Leyte Gulf should be finished, and it was my understanding, as pointed out in the letter of January 7th to Admiral Felt, that this was the basic agreement at the time I accepted the assignment.

The only problem that really had arisen, heretofore, was whether or not I was to be on active duty. All of the Presidents of the Naval War College have wanted me on active duty and have battled for it, because it was easier to operate that way. I think that I should be continued in this job--still on active duty--not only for the above reason, but also because, with the Cordiner Bill about to come into effect, it seems to me I should be given the opportunity of benefiting by it a little bit as I have given up all these years to the Service (forty-seven). According to the press the Army is doing that right now, i.e., they are holding officers about to retire in order to give them the benefit of this bill. However, this of little importance when compared with the importance of getting the job done.

Bern Anderson, Rear Admiral Sam Morison's assistant, tells me that Sam is going to speak to Admiral Burke, next Monday or Tuesday, on this subject and maybe to Secretary Gates. Morison has told me the same thing. He is doing this because he believes thoroughly in this analysis and thinks it is not only unusual but is of great benefit not only to our naval service but to students of war and to historians in general.

1108

Certainly, as I wrote to Don Felt, we must finish Surigao Strait. This is not only a great naval victory, but it was a destroyer action wherein the destroyer operations were very clearly delineated. If they won't do anything else they should let me finish this one, preferably on active duty, but finish it anyway. I feel that to complete this will take me into Fiscal 1959.

If they are willing to let me do somewhat more than that, they should permit me to complete the operations until 2400, October 24th, as most of the major decisions had been made by then. I estimate that I could do this by June 30, 1960.

Finally, if you will look at the February 3rd letter I wrote to Don Felt you will see the status of the study of the Battle for Leyte Gulf. Volumes I, II, and III are completed, Volume IV is partially completed, and Volume V, the Battle of Surigao Strait, very largely completed. However, since the Government Printing Office publishes my volumes by photo-offset, rather than by printing, there is so much to be done to get a volume in shape, even after it has been completed, that it will be some time before the book is ready to be finally typed.

Let me hope that all is well with you and your family. I am not too concerned about your business successes. I notice in the papers that you have commenced paying off arrears in Hotel Corporation stock. What a Chairman of the Board you are!!

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Rear Admiral J. J. Bergen, USNR
40 Wall Street
New York, N. Y.

1109

6 February 1958

Dear Grace and Mick:

Although perhaps a little slow in acknowledging it, this letter is to thank you very much for your thoughtfulness in thinking of me at Christmas time. I appreciated your Christmas card very much indeed, and particularly liked the door at 1314. I suppose you are wise, in Washington, in keeping the door closed, and the inference I gathered from your card is that the door will be open to me, if and when I come there. Needless to say I am anxious to see through that doorway and hope presently to be able to do so.

As for you, Mick, I notice that the Bath Iron Works is moving up the list and has succeeded in obtaining additional orders for destroyers. Everyone of us agree that this is a very fine thing, as, in my opinion the Bath destroyers always had a superiority over the others.

I know that weather conditions haven't been too good in Washington. They haven't been too good up here either! However, we are used to it and expect it, which makes it relatively unimportant, whereas you, in the Washington area, are not used to it and don't expect it. Therefore, anything below normal is a problem.

I suppose you heard this about the Sputniks. They say that the next move is to put an attractive girl in the next Sputnik. The idea is purely scientific, as the scientists believe that if the girl becomes pregnant it will prove conclusively that there is a man in the moon.

With much appreciation, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Admiral and Mrs. R. A. Carney
1314 28th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C.

1110

7 February 1958

Dear Joe:

As you perhaps know I haven't been in Washington in recent months, so that I haven't had the occasion to look you up. However, since my section is in sort of a jam here, I started looking today to see what friends of mine, who knew well what I was doing here, were in Washington. To my surprise, and pleasure, I learned that you had returned from Trinidad and were back as Admiral Libby's assistant.

I am, therefore, writing to you to invite your attention to a letter which I recently wrote to Admiral Libby. Whether you know it or not my section has always operated under Admiral Libby's desk although the title has varied somewhat, and whenever I was in need I came down there to see the incumbent. I have always had the most marvelous cooperation from them, and the many officers who have held the desk have been helpful in assisting me to accomplish my objectives.

Now, as I wrote to Admiral Libby, there is a pretty strong move afoot to deactivate my section. So, I wrote to Admiral Libby about it. At the same time I wrote to Admiral Felt and asked him to take no action until I had seen him. As you know Admiral Felt is coming to Newport on Tuesday to deliver an address before the College--by the way, the one he gave here last year was swell--and he wrote me that he was going to see me, so I am hoping that he will have better news than he indicated to me earlier.

As I wrote Admiral Libby--I presume you have seen the letter--I feel that the Battle of Surigao Strait (Volume V), on which I have spent a lot of time, should be completed, and I should like, if possible, to write the operations of the various commanders at least until 2400, October 24th, 1944 (Volume IV). This is primarily because the principle decisions on both sides had been made by that time, and secondarily, because I have done a lot of work on it. I am enclosing an outline of the present status of the Leyte study.

As a matter of interest John Sylvester has reviewed parts of the Battle of Surigao Strait. I asked him to do this since he was Admiral Oldendorf's operations officer and he wrote back, in part, "I have thoroughly enjoyed reading your analysis, and know far more about the Battle of Surigao Strait than I ever did before. As a general comment I consider it an exceptionally thorough and well thought out piece of work. I am anticipating a chance to read the continuation of your study." "Germany" Curtis, whom I suppose, is

now Commander Western Sea Frontier, indicated that, although he had not been able to thoroughly study, what I had sent him, what he had read appeared to be excellent. So, there you are!! Everyone that I know of is interested and says that it should not be stopped. Since the rumor has gotten around the College, members of the staff, the students, and even the professors on the staff have indicated a great surprise and disappointment.

I think that the problem in Washington is this. All of you, in high command positions, are so extraordinarily busy with the problem of modern warfare that you forget that much can be learned from past warfare. This would be particularly so in the event of a nuclear stalemate, for any brush fires would be largely fought by what might be termed "orthodox warfare".

I look forward to seeing you one day soon in Washington. I am planning to come down there, and I most certainly will see you.

With best regards to you and to Dolly, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Enclosure:

- (1) Copy of Status of Naval War College Analysis,
Battle for Leyte Gulf.

Rear Admiral J. H. Wellings, USN
Room 4E588, Pentagon
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D.C.

7 February 1958

Dear Mr. Wickes:

I cannot begin to tell you, in simple language, how much I enjoyed the privilege of being one of your guests last night at Starbord House.

I thought that your dinner in honor of the four foreign officers and their wives was most delightful, and I know that everyone including Rear Admiral and Mrs. Lyman, enjoyed themselves thoroughly.

The foreign officers and notably the Italian Captain, Captain Giuseppe Pighini, were very impressed with the wonderful pieces of art which you have in your house, and they were also impressed with the way you do things.

I feel that your action in this case will do a lot to cement the relationships between the representatives of Italy, Argentina, Columbia and Cuba with the Newport area, and therefore with the United States.

Finally, I want to say that in my opinion, and in the opinion of all of us who know you, you are quite a man!

With best regards and many thanks, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Mr. Forsyth Wickes
"Starbord House"
Narragansett Ave.
Newport, R. I.

1113

10 February 1958

Dear Fitzgerald:

I have taken up with the President of the Naval War College your acceptance of our request that you paint his portrait.

Admiral Ingersoll is delighted and is quite willing to make the time suitable to your wishes. Therefore, I would say that your suggestion that you come up here about May 1st is entirely satisfactory to us. The big job now, of course, will be for me to make arrangements with the Bureau of Personnel for your assignment to active duty from May 1st on.

The President of the College has also told me that I am at liberty to inform you that he has included your name as one of his personal guests for Global Strategy. Thus you will be killing two birds with one stone as you did last year, although you really killed three birds with one stone then; i.e., McCormick, Robbins, and Global Strategy.

As to my own portrait--perhaps it should be done and it is a matter I would like to discuss with you when you come this spring. There is a move afoot to bounce me out of here but I am hoping it won't happen!

While I was in California someone in Washington slit my throat. I have attempted to repair it but so far not too effectively.

I want to congratulate you on writing a book, or even attempting to write one, because I have now written six books and am well along on my seventh. I do not recommend it as a delightful pastime.

One reason why I am such a confirmed bachelor is perhaps because I never enjoyed writing; therefore no "dame" had me nailed.

Did you hear the story about the foreman who was constructing a house and went over to see how his

1114

carpenters were doing. He suddenly noticed one carpenter would drive a nail and then would throw five or six nails away before driving another nail. He said to the carpenter, "What do you mean by throwing away those new nails?" To which the carpenter replied, "The heads are on the wrong end." The foreman in great anger said, "What is the matter with you, stupid, those nails are for the other side of the house."

Best wishes to you, my old friend.

I am as ever,

R. W. BATES

Mr. Edmond J. Fitzgerald
94 The Post Road
Larchmont, N.Y.

10 February 1958

Dear Mr. Trott:

I hope that you won't be surprised to hear from me as we, unfortunately, very rarely encounter one another. Our last meeting was at Louise Safe's last December when I visited there for the Philharmonic Ball and you very kindly came in to say "hello".

Well, what I am writing to you about is this. Sometime ago I read in a Providence newspaper that Dr. Woodward would be retiring shortly as President of the University of Rhode Island.

I am, therefore, taking the liberty of writing to you to ask you, if such an eventuality occurs, if you would be willing to put in a good word for the former President of the Naval War College, Rear Admiral Thomas H. Robbins, Jr., USN. (Biography enclosed). Certainly from my own knowledge (a) of universities--I have an MS in engineering from Columbia University--and (b) of Admiral Robbins--I was with him all of the time he was at the Naval War College as stated above--I feel that he would discharge these duties with distinction. Admiral Robbins, who was President here for about a year and a half and Chief of Staff for about two and one-half years, is well recognized in the armed services for his mental power. I think it not unlikely that you know him. At present he is on duty in Washington where he is head of several boards.

I realize, of course, that you are not one of the Trustees of that University but it seems to me that your importance in Rhode Island, particularly as Chairman of the Board of Hospital Trust Company, is such as to practically insure that in seeking a President of the University of Rhode Island you might well be consulted.

The newspaper, in discussing the necessity for obtaining a new President of the University of Rhode Island, stated that his salary would be increased from \$16,000 to \$18,000. Since Admiral Robbins will be drawing retired pay from the Navy I feel confident that he would not require this increase.

With best regards and with hopes that you won't feel that my writing you is an imposition, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BETES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret)

Enclosure (1):
Description of Qualifications

Mr. Raymond H. Trott
Rhode Island Hospital Trust Co.
Providence, Rhode Island

1116

11 February 1958

MEMORANDUM

To: Admiral Felt
From: Commodore Bates

1. I was very happy to have the pleasure not only to hear you in your masterly exposition of the Navy of the Future but also in your splendid handling of the question and answer period.
2. I was also very happy to talk to you briefly relative to my own problem here.
3. For several years I have been working on Volume V, the Battle of Surigao Strait. About seventy-five per cent of the fundamental plotting has been done. Because this involved a night action in narrow waters, this plot, which is absolutely essential to any further analysis, has been long drawn out.
4. However, enough of it has been finished to permit me to draft, so far, about fifty per cent of the narrative of the action.
5. I might have been further along in my Surigao work here if not for two factors.
 - (a) I had to complete Volume III covering the Allied landing and the Japanese opposing operations.
 - (b) I have not had the full time use of a cartographer—he being also used in the Electronic Maneuver Board System.
6. The direct benefits of my work on Leyte Gulf in Volumes I and II are attested by the comments of Admirals Raymond Spruance, Henry Hewitt, and many others who reviewed parts of them. However, there has been another indirect effect which may be even more important.

These analyses have been used in two lectures to the War College on practical problems in command. These are precisely the kind of illustrations needed to give life to the studies of Command Decision and Planning which are so essential a part of the War College. In each case the interest and value of the lecture has been shown by the length and quality of the question period, and by subsequent official comments in writing by staff and students.
7. The preoccupation of our people with all-out general war has as you say distracted many from the study of limited war.

11117

8. In limited war the mind of command will be tested by precisely the same kind of decisions as were made by our commanders in Leyte Gulf. Therefore, it appears clear to me that completion of this "Analysis of Command" and the elicitation of the correct lessons from it is essential to the mental preparation of our future naval commanders.

9. When I drew up my first partial draft of Surigao Strait I sent it out to the Pacific Fleet to have it reviewed. I am preparing to do the same thing with my present draft but this time I hope to have the Chief of Staff of the Naval War College (Rear Admiral C. H. Lyman) review it as well as COMDESLANT. This accomplishes two things. It gives me the benefit of their brains and it gives them the benefit of my analysis.

10. Here are the comments of my original draft which I received from Rear Admiral John Sylvester:

"I have thoroughly enjoyed reading your analysis, and know far more about the Battle of Surigao Strait than I ever did before. As a general comment I consider it an exceptionally thorough and well thought out piece of work. I am anticipating a chance to read the continuation of your study."

11. My present plans for Volume V, "Battle of Surigao Strait" are as follows:

(a) To complete the work in the drafting room on the charts--these are known as "diagrams" in the book. This ought to take about three months--it may take more.

(b) To complete the draft of the battle proper. This can parallel the chart work.

(c) To work up the approach to the battle covering the operations of the concerned Japanese commanders and the U.S. commanders--three months.

(d) To complete the table of contents and the brief of the battle--two months.

(e) To have the book reviewed--two months.

(f) To have the book typed up by specially designated secretaries for off-set printing such as the Government Printing Office requires for all my volumes--four months.

12. May I ask you if you will ask your staff to show you a copy of Volume III. I think you will be astonished at the size of the volume and the amount of work that went into it.

13. Finally, I wish to say that after you departed I reported our conversation to Vice Admiral Ingersoll who said, "I desire the Battle of Surigao Strait completed."

R. W. BATES

12 February 1958

Dear Tom:

It has been some time since I have written to you so I thought I would seize the pen during the absence of Admiral Eccles, who happens to be visiting Professor Katzenbach in Boston, to dictate a letter through Mrs. King.

I have been looking into the matter that you wrote me about and I discovered that the gentleman to whom you were referring was a Mr. Michael Walsh. I did not know Mr. Walsh and asked Henry Eccles to talk to him which he did. Mr. Walsh told him that he had already received a letter from Admiral Connolly so you see both Eccles and Connolly spoke in your behalf.

I know Mr. Trott of the Rhode Island Hospital Trust and I wrote to him about you on the ground that, although he wasn't a trustee he, nevertheless, might be helpful. I have heard nothing as yet from him.

I haven't bothered John Richmond about this because he was heading for Palm Beach, when Sophie's mother suddenly died and they had to turn back. I haven't seen them since, although I spoke to Sophie for a couple of minutes. They are leaving for points south, very shortly.

I called Scotty Umsted, a classmate of mine living in Jamestown, and asked him who the trustees of the University were. Believe it or not he had no idea! It took me a little while to discover their names and I am giving them to you now.

Chairman	- Mr. Livingston Kelly No. Kingston
Vice Chairman	- Henry J. Blais, Jr. Pawtucket
Trustees	- Arthur Hanley Cranston
	- Michael S. Walsh Newport
	- Caroline Heverly Providence
	- Virginia V. MacLeod Providence
	- Francis I. McGann Providence

I don't know whether the two females of this board are married or not, but I believe the chances that they are not are very great.

I have not seen John Nicholas Brown recently; possibly because the weather has been so cold here that people aren't visiting over much. I understand the weather in the south is equally bad. The Foreign Officers, who went to Key West recently, said that the highest temperature was about 54° and, since they were in their whites, they were not impressed with the warmth.

You may have wondered why I didn't write before this, but I had a pretty bad cold for a while which slowed me down; then I ran into a problem here which has bothered me no end. Fortunately I have recovered from the cold but not from the problem. The problem is this: there is a move afoot to deactivate my section. I don't know who started it but I think it was Admiral Holloway. I don't blame him for trying to remove the retired officers from the active list because he has always had strong ideas about this for a long time. The nature of the problem today is that, not only do they want to remove me, but, they want to deactivate the section as well.

I wrote to Admiral Felt, who came up here and delivered a speech yesterday which was excellent. He talked with me on the subject for about 20 minutes which I found quite helpful.

I don't know what is going to happen now. Admiral Ingersoll told me yesterday that he was anxious to complete Surigao Strait -- so am I. I think it will take about one year -- typing alone will be about four months. As you know the books have to be typed for printing by the Government Printing Office.

I hope to come down to Washington one day to see if I can help to solve my problem. Very frankly I think that the whole Battle of Leyte Gulf Study should be completed, but it looks now as if I am allowed to complete only the Battle of Surigao Strait I will have accomplished a feat. I, personally, feel that it may require the Secretary of the Navy to take action as he did last year.

It is too bad that we have to be constantly under tension owing to the lack of surety that the job will continue from year to year. Knowing that you share my feelings about this and are thoroughly familiar with Volume III which is now out, I think you might be able to say something to somebody which could be effective, but to whom you might speak to I don't know.

The manner in which this whole thing has been conducted has been peculiar. Heretofore, I have been invited to Washington and asked to continue the study and the President, Naval War College, has been requested to write a letter. I think in this case no letter was requested and I have not been invited to Washington, although I did receive some nice personal letters.

Newport is very quiet. Very few of your friends are here -- probably not even ten.

The War College St. Valentine's Party will be held Friday night but I haven't decided if I will attend.

Nothing new otherwise! 2

I think the College is going along well and everybody seems full of ginger as spring comes on and graduation approaches.

With best regards to you and Barbara and with the hope that Lucky has not been signed up by the Washington Senators who certainly need her, I am, as ever,

RICHARD W. BATES

Rear Admiral Thomas H. Robbins, Jr., USN
Arlington Annex
Room G706
Washington 25, D. C.

13 February 1958

Dear Tommie:

This morning I received a letter from Mr. Raymond H. Trott, Chairman of the Board of Rhode Island Trust Co., in which, after thanking me for my letter, he said:

"I have already spoken to James P. Adams, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island about Admiral Robbins and have also written him a letter suggesting that careful consideration be given him. Admiral Robbins seems to me to be very well qualified except for the matter of his age, as I have an idea that they may be looking for a younger man. You may be assured that I shall do everything I can to further Admiral Robbins' interest."

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Rear Admiral T. H. Robbins, Jr., USN
Room G708, Arlington Annex
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D.C.

1122

13 February 1958

Dear Murphy:

In looking over your court rulings and legal decisions as expounded in the January-February 1958 edition of the Retired Officer, I notice on page 14 under B-132777, October 7, 1957, a statement concerning a Navy Captain who was transferred to the retired list and advanced to the rank of Rear Admiral. This Captain continued on active duty, and, according to the decision, "...may have the advancement on the retired list regarded as conferring on him the permanent grade of Rear Admiral, in consonance with the Decision of *McCool v. United States*, decided January 16, 1957, 6 Cls. No. 137-56, and, therefore, the officer who served satisfactorily on active duty for two years as Rear Admiral is entitled to the active duty pay and allowances of Rear Admiral (Upper Half) under 10 U.S.C. 5507(e)."

I am quite interested in this decision because of my own peculiar status. I was a Commodore in the war and after the war, then reverted for a time to Captain. I was retired in April 1949 for physical disability and was promoted to Rear Admiral on the retired list. Several months later, in 1949, I was recalled to active duty as a Commodore (Retired) and continued as a Commodore ever since. As you know a Commodore enjoys practically everything which applies to a Rear Admiral (Lower Half), and in particular the same pay and allowances.

I am wondering if, when I retire, this law applies to me? It would be very nice to be included in the Upper Half under such conditions, and as a matter of personal interest, since I have been working here, not for myself but at the direct request of the Chief of Naval Operations, I should have some recognition.

I find your retired officer magazine very interesting and you own selection of legal rulings clear and very much to the point.

With best regards, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

RAFE BATES

Rear Admiral H. D. Murphy, USN (Ret)
The Retired Officer Association
1616 Eye St., N. W.
Washington 6, D.C.

1123

17 February 1958

Dear Pulie:

Now that the winter is finally upon us and we are wallowing in about a foot of snow with a cold wind, I find that I have time to sit down and write to you and to "pay" you. Whether you know it or not I owe you \$12.36 for the football tickets which you kindly let me have after you had decided not to use them. They were excellent and my party was very happy, so you can look at yourself in the glass and say, "there is a fellow who has done a nice deed".

I hope things are going well with you down there, and that you are not finding the trials of a cold Florida winter too bothersome. You perhaps get some hot days--we get none.

I was very pleased to note your friendly remarks about our section. They were well received for this section is on its way to dissolution, in that the Navy Department seems about to order its deactivation. There has been no written order on this subject as yet, but I have received advices by personal letter indicating the nearness of the "bad news". I say "bad news" because I thoroughly believe in what we are doing, and thoroughly believe in its importance in the study of command. Since you are an old student of the art of war I feel free to tell you about this, as I know that you will understand how I feel about it.

We like to see you in our office. You are always a big laugh. Whenever you come in all hands stop work, and sit down to get some of the wisdom of the ages and at the same time, to hear a little humor.

1124

I look forward to seeing you later on this summer.

With best regards to you and to your Mrs., I am, as
ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Captain W. D. Puleston, USN (Ret)
Mountain Lake
Lakes Wales, Florida

1125

20 February 1958

Dear Jasper:

I received your letter of 3 February in due time and I am quite interested in your desire to write a book on the Battle of Midway. Very frankly, the only thing I have on Midway, now, is my study of the Battle of Midway which I wrote in 1948. As a matter of information, Admiral Raymond Spruance was President of the Naval War College at the time and was very pleased to discover how things developed during the battle and the accuracy of his own decisions. Admiral Spruance was one of those that reviewed the volume; another being "Cat" Brown, now Commander SIXTH Fleet; another now Vice Admiral John Sylvester.

I received a letter from your good friend Sherman Clark and I replied to it about as follows: That (a) I am not allowed to release any classified material to any retired officers, and (b) retired officers, unfortunately, have no standing after they retire with relation to classified material. I believe that if you will write to "Judge" Eller, who is the historian for the Navy, at the following address, he should be able to help you on this matter:

Rear Admiral E. M. Eller, USN (Ret)
Director of Naval History (Op-29)
Navy Department
Washington 25, D.C.

I don't doubt that he could get some of the action reports for that time downgraded so that you can use them. I have succeeded in getting all reports and dispatches used by me downgraded to Confidential, but I have never been able, nor have I ever really attempted to get anything downgraded below that.

For your information, Judge Eller is the principle source to which I refer when I am in a problem. I have also written to some of the Navy Records Management Centers such as Mechanicsburg, Alexandria and Clearfield, Utah. My thought on this is that if you did write to Admiral Eller and told him your problem he would have his people look up the reports and downgrade them, if possible, and if not able to downgrade them, would provide some other source if available.

Many of these action reports are in the Naval War College, but as we have only one copy and they are being used by the students I am quite certain the College would not approve mailing them elsewhere.

1126

With reference to your question about the NAUTILUS and the SORYU and KAGA, I want to say that I haven't done anything about this since Fuchida's book came out. That is, I haven't conducted any research, but I did talk to Captain T. W. Hogan who was engineering officer of the NAUTILUS and to Brockman himself. Brockman and Hogan stuck to the view that the carrier they sank was the SORYU. They stated that they had plenty of time to study the characteristics of the ship torpedoed, and there was no question but that it was the SORYU. Captain Hogan further stated that anybody who knew Captain Brockman would know that if it had been possible for him to have claimed anything bigger than the SORYU he would have done so. Hogan also told this to Admiral Sam Morison, USNR, who is writing the Navy's history, and Morison said he was satisfied and wasn't going to pursue the matter further.

As for myself, I am now working on the Battle of Surigao Strait and find it highly interesting although difficult to plot because of the great factor of night.

I am sorry that I am not able to give you very much information as we are not a basic source. I am sorry also that I haven't been very helpful, but my position is difficult to say the least. Privately, between ourselves, I have been "bawled" out for even showing my work to Hanson Baldwin who was at the Naval War College for our Global Strategy Discussions with a high security clearance. The reason for this bawling out, I think, was that they don't want to have people everywhere writing in and asking for advice and documents simply because Hanson Baldwin had seen them.

I am very proud of your performance at the University of Hawaii. I know that for a long time you have been high in the upper echelons of that institution which I learned to know quite a lot about during my many years in Hawaii.

If I can be of any further assistance, and heaven knows I haven't been of too much, I shall be happy to advise.

With best regards and my best "Aloha", I am,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Captain W. J. Holmes, USN (Ret)
4009 Black Point Rd.
Honolulu 15, T. H.

1127

20 February 1958

Conolly

Dear Dick:

That was a very nice letter that you wrote to Admiral Burke, and I hope that if it does nothing else it will give him some background on my project, which even I was not entirely familiar with. I feel that your letter was an extremely interesting one, and one which covers the subject extraordinarily well. Your knowledge of my work is surprisingly accurate, and I use the word surprisingly advisedly because you have been so long away from here with a multitude of other problems. I feel very fine indeed when friends of mine, such as yourself, write a letter in my behalf, which letter was entirely unsolicited by me, and written largely through appreciation of a project and its project engineer.

Admiral Don Felt came up here and gave a talk at the Naval War College which was excellent. (By the way General LeMay talked this morning and his talk was vastly superior to any I have heard heretofore in that it was much broader.) I had a long talk with Don about this job and he indicated that the matter was not settled and would be settled after a while with Admiral Burke.

Our mutual friend, Jack Bergen, called me the other day about things--he had been in California for the Navy League--and he told me that he was quite interested in my problem here. I told him that you had written a letter to Admiral Burke which covered it completely, and that if he would get a copy of that letter he would be fully informed of the background of my project. I sent him some letters I had written so that he knew the problem.

Very frankly I don't know what is going to happen, but I suppose that I will hear shortly. Whatever the decision is I can say that I have enjoyed working on this project even though it is very difficult, and takes a vast amount of time. I hope that the product of this office will be of value for years to come.

I hope to be down there in March in accordance with your invitation. I have been invited to Boston with Admiral Morison on the 16th to meet Field Marshal Slessor, your old friend from the Royal Air Force. I hope that this date does not conflict with yours which I understand is the 12th of March.

I am wondering whether you have moved into your new house as yet, and if so, how do you find it.

With best regards to you and to Helen, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

1128

25 February 1958

Dear Mr. Elair:

I suppose you will be a little startled to hear from me, and I am a little surprised that I am writing this letter. However, a young lady in Newport, who is musical instructor in the Middletown Schools, is seeking an entry into the television field such as "musical education" for children.

I know nothing of the competence of this young lady in the television field, but since she teaches music in the local schools, and is connected with the Jazz Festival, she clearly has talent.

What I am asking about is this. In your connections with the television world, have you developed any ideas as to how someone, such as this young woman, would be able to break into that field? She tells me that television is stressing education for children in many fields but that the music field has been left vacant.

In my limited knowledge I told her that I thought that she ought to start out in a local station and gradually bloom from that to something larger such as a network. She says the local station should be in New York.

New subject:

I miss seeing you and your happy group at Film Graphics. We are working now on the Battle of Surigao Strait, which, if my office continues to exist, will be finished within the next year, at which time I shall stress the matter of making a film of the above battle.

With best regards to your and to your family, and to my friends there in Film Graphics, I am, as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret)

1129

28 February 1958

Dear Ross:

I received your letter of 7 February and have delayed replying to you because the information we have on Allied mining here is very low. Very frankly the information contained in my Volumes II and III of the Battle for Leyte Gulf gives the minesweeping operations incident to the movement of the Amphibious Forces into Leyte in October 1944, but other than that the minelaying and minesweeping factors in the battles which I have written have been largely negative.

We have, in my office, no other information on mines. The Naval War College has a mine officer, Commander Philip G. Saylor, USN, who has kindly looked into the matter and he emphasizes what I say, and that is that the mine information for World War II has not been collected in the Naval War College in any comprehensive way.

There is considerable information in our files relative to the operations in which minesweeping was required. Other than that we are not very good. So I don't think that I can be of any particular help!

Needless to say I regret this very much because I am very concerned about minelaying and minesweeping and have been for a long time. If you will recall, in the Pacific War, I consulted with you pretty heavily on this subject, because Oldendorf's forces were forced to go into areas where the Japanese had planted many mines. At Leyte we swept Japanese chemical-horn moored mines; at Balikpapan our problem, as I recall, had to do with clearing American mines largely laid by aircraft. This was a tough assignment for the minesweepers.

Commander Saylor has some data on mine operations which I now list:

(a) Minecraft in the War - Proof copy of a history of U.S. mine warfare in World War II written by Captain Ellsworth Dudley McElathron on 8 August 1946 in the Office of Naval History. Only Books I and II are available here, and these concern description and functions of minecraft and minecraft commands respectively. Books III and IV, not on hand, were to have been concerned with mine warfare operations in the Atlantic and Pacific, however, these may be available in the Office of Naval History. This work apparently was not completed or published, as no other record is available here.

1130

(b) Mine Warfare Information Summary of Allied Mines in Japanese and Korean Waters - Promulgated by CINCPacFlt serial 034 of 11 January 1947. A series of charts showing locations of Allied aerial and submarine laid mines as of 1 August 1946. (Confidential)

(c) Press Notes on Minesweeping Operations in Northern Asiatic Waters - Prepared by Commander Minescraft, Pacific Fleet in March 1946. An eight page report of post World War II Allied minesweeping operations in Japanese waters giving general information as to dates, areas swept, and forces employed. (Unclassified)

(d) Operation Plan, COMINPAC No. 11-46 - An operation plan prepared by Admiral Struble for minesweeping of Bikini Atoll in preparation for Operation CROSSROADS in 1946. Includes chart showing areas swept by GTU 96.3.81 during World War II period, 27 September to 27 October 1945, and brief information as to number and type of mines swept. (Confidential)

(e) The Offensive Minelaying Campaign Against Japan - A Strategic Bombing Survey published by the Naval Analysis Division on 1 November 1946. Contains quite detailed information concerning U.S. mining campaigns by submarines, minelayers, naval aircraft and Army Air Corps aircraft. (Confidential).

My suggestion is (I don't doubt that you have already done what I am suggesting) would be to write to (a) Rear Admiral E. M. Eller, USN (Ret), Director of Naval History, Room 1210, Main Navy Building, Washington 25, D. C., (b) the Bureau of Ordnance, and (c) the Naval Records Management Centers, Mechanicsburg, Pa., where the flag reports are retained, and Alexandria, Va., where the ship reports are retained.

I would suggest further that you ask Admiral Eller if his office would check any data you obtain and have it downgraded.

Finally I want to wish you well in what you are doing. I am sure that it is very rewarding to you. Even though your production rate is slow I am thoroughly interested in it, as I said before, and I hope I shall be able to see what you finally produce.

I appreciate your comments on my work here. I have received many ecomiums on it, but I am not too sure that it will continue much longer. There seems to be considerable opposition to continuing a World War II study. On what grounds, I don't know, although many reasons have been given, not the least of which is retired officers on active duty, etc.

With best regards and regrets that I have not been too helpful, I am,
as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Rear Admiral R. P. Whitemarsh, USN (Ret)
Black Rock Road
Oaks, Penna.

Memorandum on my transportation costs on the occasion of TAD orders during 1956.

a. Washington, D. C.

1. I was in Washington on the nights of:

- (a) February 5, 6, 7
- (b) May 20, 21, 22, 23
- (c) July 4, 5
- (d) August 20
- (e) October 8, 9, 10

2. Therefore, my club charges for rooms were:

- (a) 3×5.67 or 17.01
- (b) 4×6.18 or 24.72
- (c) 2×6.18 or 13.40
- (d) 1×7.21 or 7.21
- (e) 3×6.18 or 18.54

A total cost of \$80.88.

2. My club charges for meals were \$96.67.

My outside charges for meals were about:

- (a) February - \$6.00 (four lunches)
- (b) May - \$6.00 (four lunches)
- (c) July - \$3.00 (2 lunches)
- (d) August - \$8.00 (meals enroute to Annapolis and return)
- (e) October - \$4.50 (3 lunches)

Total: \$27.50

Total all meals - $\$96.67 + \27.50 or \$124.17

3. Total expended for rooms and meals:

$\$80.88 + \124.17 or \$205.05

3 March 1958

New York Yacht Club
37 West 44th St.
New York 36, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

For income tax purposes I desire the following information:

a. The cost of my rooms there on:

1. Nights of April 26, 27, 1957
2. Night of May 2, 1957

b. The cost of my meals there on:

1. April 26, 27, 28, 1957
2. May 2, 3, 1957

If the above information is not available, a general estimate of the cost of the rooms should be enough.

A prompt reply would be appreciated.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret)

1133

3 March 1958

University Club
1135 16th St., N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen:

For income tax purposes I desire the following information:

a. The cost of my rooms there on:

1. Nights of January 21, 22, 1957
2. Night of February 26, 1957
3. Nights of April 30 and May 1, 1957
4. Nights of May 14, 15, 1957
5. Night of August 18, 1957
6. Night of September 16, 1957
7. Nights of September 26, 28, 1957
8. Night of October 11, 1957

b. The cost of my meals there on:

1. January 21, 22, 23, 1957
2. February 26, 27, 1957
3. April 30 and May 1, 2, 1957
4. May 14, 15, 16, 1957
5. August 18, 19, 1957
6. September 16, 17, 1957
7. September 26, 27, 28, 1957
8. October 11, 1957

If the above information is not available, a general estimate of the cost of the rooms should be enough. It seems to me that I was generally in one of the air-cooled rooms.

A prompt reply would be appreciated.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret)

1134

4. Reimbursed by Government for rooms and meals - \$185.25

5. Negative difference - \$19.80

b. New York, N. Y.

1. I was in New York on the nights of:

(a) March 6

(b) March 9

(c) August 22

(d) October 29

My room charges were:

(a) \$7.88

(b) \$7.00 (estimate)

(c) \$7.00 (estimate)

(d) \$6.30

A total cost of \$28.38

2. My club charges for meals were:

(a) \$10.60

(b) \$2.35

(c) \$7.00

(d) \$8.65

Total: \$28.60

3. Total expended for rooms and meals: $\$28.38 + 28.60 = \56.98

4. Reimbursed by Government: \$61.75

5. Positive difference - \$5.13

c. Loss - a.5. minus b.5. = \$14.67